

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 231115Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5516
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY THERAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 8337

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AF, PK, LY

SUBJ: LIBYAN MINISTER OF STATE CARRYING MESSAGE FROM KABUL
TO ISLAMABAD ON PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

1. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH TOLD ME DECEMBER 22
THAT LIBYAN MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS BOUZEID
DORDAH, WHO VISITED KABUL DECEMBER 20-22, WILL BE CARRYING
A MESSAGE TO ISLAMABAD INDICATING THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT
IS READY TO START TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
ON A WORKING LEVEL.

2. ABDULLAH SAID THAT DORDAH'S VISIT WAS A SURPRISE AND
THAT THE GOA HAD BEEN TOLD OF IT ONLY THE EVENING BEFORE
HIS ARRIVAL. WHILE HERE, HE HAD TALKS BOTH WITH ABDULLAH
AND WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD. MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION DEALT
WITH THE MIDDLE EAST, WITH THE LIBYANS GIVING THE AFGHANS
THEIR STANDARD HARD LINE. THE AFGHANS, HOWEVER, USED
THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL THE LIBYANS ABOUT THEIR ATTITUDE
TOWARDS PAKISTAN.

3. ABDULLAH SAID THAT HE AND DAOUD TOLD DORDAH THAT
AFGHANISTAN DOES NOT DESIRE THE DISINTEGRATION OF
PAKISTAN, COVETS NO PAK TERRITORY AND HOPES THAT THE
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QUESTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PUSHTUNS AND BALUCHIS

CAN BE RESOLVED BY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE PUSHTUN AND BALUCH LEADERS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PAK CONSTITUTION. ABDULLAH SAID THAT HE HAD NOTED A RECENT BHUTTO SPEECH AND COMMENTS BY AZIZ AHMED IN TEHRAN WHICH INDICATED A SOMEWHAT Milder PAKISTANI LINE THAN HAD BEEN PUT FORWARD PREVIOUSLY. IN THIS CONNECTION, ABDULLAH SAID THAT HE TOLD DORDAH THAT AFGHANISTAN COULD NOT AGREE AT THIS POINT TO A SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN DAOUD AND BHUTTO BUT THAT SUCH A MEETING SHOULD BE PREPARED FIRST AT THE WORKING LEVEL. WHEN I ASKED HIM WHAT THIS MEANT, HE SAID THAT HE ENVISAGED TALKS FIRST AT THE LEVEL OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL (SAMAD GHASUS) OF THE AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTRY TO BE FOLLOWED BY TALKS BETWEEN HIMSELF AND AGHA SHAHI. HE SAID THAT THE AFGHAN WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN WORKING-LEVEL TALKS WOULD BE CONVEYED TO ISLAMABAD BY DORDAH.

4. I ASKED ABDULLAH ABOUT PROPAGANDA. HE SAID THAT NOTHING COULD BE DONE AT THE PRESENT TIME ABOUT PROPAGANDA BUT THAT IF TALKS WERE TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, THE LEVEL OF PROPAGANDA COULD BE REDUCED IN STEP WITH PROGRESS MADE IN THE TALKS. HE ENVISAGED THAT ONE OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF A SUMMIT MEETING COULD BE THE MUTUAL CESSATION OF HOSTILE PROPAGANDA.

5. ABDULLAH SAID, AS HE HAS SAID SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT WEEKS, THAT THE GOA IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN. HE SAID THAT ONE OF HIS CONCERNS IS THAT BHUTTO WOULD BE REPLACED BY A HARD LINE MILITARY REGIME AND THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES PROGRESS IN IMPROVING PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. STANGE AS IT MIGHT SEEM, HE SAID IN THIS CONTEXT THE GOA IS GLAD BHUTTO IS IN CHARGE.

6. COMMENT: WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, BE SURE THAT DORDAH WILL CONVEY THE AFGHAN WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN WORKING-LEVEL TALKS ACCURATELY. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL, IF THE DEPARTMENT AND AMBASSADOR BYROADE AGREE, FOR EMBASSY ISLAMABAD TO PROBE THIS POINT FOLLOWING DORDAH'S VISIT
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TO ISLAMABAD. ALTHOUGH IT CONTINUES TO BE DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE HOW PAK-AFGHAN DISCUSSIONS CAN RESOLVE WHAT IS AN ESSENTIALLY INSOLUBLE PROBLEM BETWEEN THEM, THE MERE FACT OF THE GOA'S WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN SUCH TALKS IS A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION AS COMPARED TO WHAT HAS EXISTED SINCE THE SHERPAO ASSASSINATION LAST FEBRUARY. IN FACT, IT SEEMS TO BE BACK TO WHERE IT WAS A YEAR AGO.

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